

The Examiner is respectfully requested to amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 4-10, 13-18, 21-27, 30-35, 38-44, and 47-51, and add new Claims 52-56 to read as follows. A marked-up copy of the amended claims, showing the changes made thereto, is attached.

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comprising:

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1. (Amended) An image managing apparatus for managing retrievable images, input means for inputting relevant information concerning one or more objects in an image, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects in the image; and memory means for storing the relevant information inputted by said input means in association with each of the one or more objects of the image, respectively.

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4. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

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5. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the

qualifier is comprised of a plurality of words.

6. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said input means includes position designating means for designating a position of an object in the image, and display means for displaying an input window used to input the relevant information concerning the object at the designated position.

7. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the position designating means designates positions of two mutually-related objects in the image.

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8. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising retrieval requirement input means for inputting requirements for retrieval, and image retrieving means for retrieving images that meet the requirements for retrieval inputted by said retrieval requirement input means.

9. (Amended) An image managing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said input means inputs supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof.

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10. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus for retrieving images, comprising:

memory means for storing one or more objects contained in an image in association with relevant information concerning the one or more objects, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects contained in the image;

retrieval requirement input means for inputting requirements for retrieval; and

retrieving means for retrieving an image that meets the requirements for retrieval inputted by said retrieval requirement input means, based on the relevant information stored in said memory means.

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13. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

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14. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the qualifier is comprise of a plurality of words.

15. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 10, further comprising a position designating means for designating a position of an object of interest in the image, and display means for displaying an input window used to input the relevant information

concerning the object at the designated position.

16. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 15, wherein said position designating means designates positions of two mutually-related objects in the image.

17. (Amended) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said input means inputs supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof.

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18. (Amended) An image managing method for managing retrievable images, comprising:

an input step of inputting relevant information concerning one or more objects in an image, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects in the image; and

a storage step of storing the relevant information inputted in said input step in association with each of the one or more objects of the image, respectively.

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21. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 18, wherein

the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

SB 22. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 19, wherein the qualifier is comprised of a plurality of words.

23. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 18, wherein said input step includes a position designation step of designating a position of an object in the image, and a display step of displaying an input window used to input the relevant information concerning the object at the designated position.

24. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 23, wherein, in the position designation step, positions of two mutually-related objects in the image are designated.

25. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 18, further comprising a retrieval requirement input step of inputting requirements for retrieval, and an image retrieval step of retrieving images that meet the requirements for retrieval inputted in said retrieval requirement input step.

26. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 18, wherein, in

said input step, supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof is inputted.

A4 27. (Amended) An image retrieving method for retrieving images, comprising:  
a storage step of storing one or more objects contained in an image in association with relevant information concerning the one or more objects, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects contained in the image;  
a retrieval requirement input step of inputting requirements for retrieval; and  
a retrieval step of retrieving an image that meets the requirements for retrieval inputted in said retrieval requirement input step, based on the stored relevant information.

30. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 27, wherein the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

A5 sub BT 31. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 28, wherein the qualifier is comprised of a plurality of words.

32. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 27, further comprising a position designation step of designating a position of an object of interest in the image, and a display step of displaying an input window used to input the relevant information concerning the object at the designated position.

33. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 32, wherein, in said position designation step, positions of two mutually-related objects in the image are designated.

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34. (Amended) An image managing method according to claim 27, wherein, in said storage step, supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof is stored.

35. (Amended) A storage medium in which is stored a program for implementing an image managing method for managing retrievable stored images, the method comprising:

an input step of inputting relevant information concerning one or more objects in an image, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects in the image; and

15 a storage step of storing the relevant information inputted in the input step in association with each of the one or more objects of the image, respectively.

38. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 35, wherein the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

Sub 39. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 36, wherein the qualifier is comprised of a plurality of words.

40. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 35, wherein the input step includes a position designation step of designating a position of an object in the image, and a display step of displaying an input window used to input the relevant information concerning the object at the designated position.

41. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 40, wherein, in the position designation step, positions of two mutually-related objects in the image are designated.

42. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 35, wherein the method further comprises a retrieval requirement input step of inputting requirements for retrieval, and an image retrieval step of retrieving images that meet the requirements for retrieval inputted in

the retrieval requirement input step.

43. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 35, wherein, in the input step, supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof is inputted.

44. (Amended) A storage medium in which is stored a program for implementing an image retrieving method for retrieving stored images, the method comprising:

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a storage step of storing one or more objects contained in an image in association with relevant information concerning the one or more objects, the relevant information including an appearance quality of each of the one or more objects contained in the image;

a retrieval requirement input step of inputting requirements for retrieval; and

a retrieval step of retrieving an image that meets the requirements for retrieval inputted in the retrieval requirement input step, based on the stored relevant information.

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47. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 44, wherein the relevant information is relationship information expressing a relationship between at least two different objects in the image.

Sub B 48. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 45, wherein the qualifier is comprised of a plurality of words.

49. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 44, wherein the method further comprises a position designation step of designating a position of an object of interest in the image, and a display step of displaying an input window used to input the relevant information concerning the object at the designated position.

A7 50. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 49, wherein, in the position designation step, positions of two mutually-related objects in the image are designated.

51. (Amended) A storage medium according to claim 44, wherein, in the storage step, supplementary information including at least one of imaging-related information of the image, special object information thereof, category information thereof, impression information thereof, time information thereof, place information thereof, weather information thereof, and event information thereof is stored.

Sub B 52. (New) An image managing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the relevant information is textual information.

53. (New) An image retrieving apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the